

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A tape guide mechanism in a storage device for defining a tape path comprising:

a cartridge reel for supplying tape to a take-up reel;
said cartridge reel being generally bisected by a longitudinal axis of said tape path; and

said tape path being generally symmetrically disposed about said axis.

2. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising:
said tape path being generally U-shaped.

3. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising:
a pair of read/write heads disposed symmetrically about said axis for reading data from and writing data to said tape.

4. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising:
a single read/write head disposed along said axis for reading data from and writing data to said tape.

5. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising:
a plurality of flanged rollers disposed symmetrically about said axis for guiding said tape, said plurality of flanged rollers being remotely located away from said cartridge and take-up reels.

6. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 5, further comprising:
said plurality of flanged rollers including a first pair of flanged rollers located proximate to a first read/write head and a second pair of flanged rollers located proximate to a second read/write head.

7. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 6, further comprising:
said first pair of flanged rollers being adjacent to each other; and
said second pair of flanged rollers being adjacent to each other.

8. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 5, further comprising:
said plurality of flanged rollers being grooved.

9. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising:
a non-flanged post guide being located proximate to said take-up reel for increasing a length of said tape path.

10. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 9, further comprising:
said post guide being non-spinning.

11. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising:
said tape path including a first portion that is generally parallel to said axis, a second portion that is generally perpendicular to said axis, and a third portion that is generally parallel to said axis.

12. (Original) A tape guide mechanism in a storage device for defining a tape path comprising:
a cartridge reel for supplying tape to a take-up reel;
a plurality of flanged guides located remotely from said cartridge and take-up reels;

a non-flanged post guide located proximate to said take-up reel for increasing a length of said tape path and for permitting said plurality of flanged guides to be located remotely from said cartridge and take-up reels; and

wherein flanged guides are not located in proximity to said cartridge or take-up reels.

13. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 12, further comprising:
said cartridge reel being bisected by a longitudinal axis of said tape path;
a pair of read/write heads symmetrically located about said axis;
said plurality of flanged guides including a first pair of flanged guides located proximate to a first one of said read/write heads and a second pair of flanged guides located proximate to a second one of said read/write head;

said tape path including a portion that starts at said first pair of flanged guides and ends at said second pair of flanged guides; and

said portion of said tape path being symmetrical about said axis.

14. (Currently Amended) The mechanism according to claim 13, further comprising:

said first pair of flanged guides being adjacent to each other; and
said second pair of flanged guides being adjacent to each other.

15. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 12, further comprising:
said non-flanged post guide being non-spinning.

16. (Original) The mechanism according to claim 12, further comprising:
said plurality of flanged guides being grooved.

17. (Original) A tape guide mechanism in a storage device for defining a tape path comprising:

a cartridge reel for supplying tape to a take-up reel;

a plurality of grooved flanged guides located remotely from said cartridge and take-up reels;

a non-spinning non-flanged post guide located proximate to said take-up reel for increasing a length of said tape path and for permitting said plurality of flanged guides to be located remotely from said cartridge and take-up reels;

wherein flanged guides are not located in proximity to said cartridge or take-up reels;

said cartridge reel being bisected by a longitudinal axis of said tape path;

a pair of read/write heads symmetrically located about said axis;

said plurality of flanged guides including a first pair of adjacent flanged guides located proximate to a first one of said read/write heads and a second pair of adjacent flanged guides located proximate to a second one of said read/write head;

said tape path including a portion that starts at said first pair of flanged guides and ends at said second pair of flanged guides; and

said portion of said tape path being symmetrical about said axis.

18. (Original) A tape guide mechanism in a storage device for defining a tape path comprising:

a cartridge reel for supplying tape to a take-up reel;

said cartridge reel being bisected by a longitudinal axis of said tape path;

said tape path being generally U-shaped and symmetrically disposed about said axis;

a pair of read/write heads disposed symmetrically about said axis for reading data from and writing data to said tape;

a plurality of flanged rollers disposed symmetrically about said axis for guiding said tape, said plurality of flanged rollers being located remotely away from said cartridge and take-up reels;

said plurality of flanged rollers including a first pair of adjacent, grooved, and flanged rollers located proximate to a first one of said pair read/write heads and a second pair

of adjacent, grooved, and flanged rollers located proximate to a second one of said pair of read/write heads;

a non-spinning, non-flanged post guide being located proximate to said take-up reel for increasing a length of said tape;

a first one of said first pair of rollers being located proximate to said first one of said pair of heads and a second one of said first pair of rollers being located remotely away from said first one of said pair of heads; and

a first one of said second pair of rollers being located proximate to said second one of said pair of heads and a second one of said second pair of rollers being located remotely away from said second one of said pair of heads.